

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1756

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, JO, IS
SUBJ: JORDANIAN/ISRAELI MEETING ON JORDAN WATER

REF: JERUSALEM 1559

SUMMARY: JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI MILITARY OFFICERS
ACCOMPANIED BY CIVILIAN WATER EXPERTS MET DEC. 18
UNDER AUSPICES OF UN TO DISCUSS UTILIZATION OF JORDAN
WATER. ISRAELIS MAINTAIN FORMER DAM (REFTEL) NOW
WASHED AWAY. NEW ISRAELI "STRUCTURE" IN RIVER NEAR
AL KARAMEH NORTH OF JERICHO DESCRIBED AS AID TO
IRRIGATION. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING TOOK PLACE ON ISRAELI SIDE OF ALLENBY BRIDGE.
ISRAELIS REPRESENTED BY COL. LEVINSON, MR. YAACOV
VARDI (VICE PRESIDENT OF TAHAL CONSULTING ENGINEERS LTD)
AND NAHUM MINTZHER (TAHAL JORDAN RIVER PROJECT MANAGER).
JORDANIAN SIDE REPRESENTED BY COL. HANNA, DR. FAHD NATUR
(DIRECTOR OF STUDY AND PLANNING DIRECTORATE) AND CAP.
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2. COL. HANNA STATED JORDANIANS WISHED TO DISCUSS
ISRAELI DAMS ON JORDAN RIVER AFTER WHICH LONG EXCHANGE
TOOK PLACE BETWEEN WATER EXPERTS. ISRAELIS MAINTAINED
DAM DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY (MAP REFERENCE 2035-2065) ON

PALESTINE GRID) HAD BEEN WASHED OUT. NEW STRUCTURE LOCATED NEAR AL KARAMEH (MR 2000-1573) (APPROXIMATELY 31 DEGREES 57 MINUTES NORTH 35 DEGREES 33 MINUTES EAST) NOT DESCRIBED AS DAM BY ISRAELIS. VARDI STATED MATERIAL HAD BEEN PLACED IN RIVER TO RAISE WATER LEVEL TO ENABLE IRRIGATION PUMPS WORK EFFICIENTLY. BY PRODUCT WAS FLOW ANALYSIS BE EXPERTS. MINTZHER SAID STRUCTURE WOULD BE DESIGNED TO "WASH OUT" DURING RAINY SEASON, NOT BE TRAFFICABLE FOR VEHICLES ACROSS THE TOP, AND WOULD ONLY RAISE WATER TO LEVEL FOR EFFICIENT PUMPING BUT NOT TO BLOCK FLOW COMPLETELY. ISRAELIS SAID "STRUCTURE" WOULD BE NEEDED FROM APRIL TO START OF RAINY SEASON OF EACH YEAR.

3. ISRAELIS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL THEIR IRRIGATION METHODS (DRIP AND SPRINKLE), THEIR SUCCESS IN USING SALINE JORDAN WATER TO IRRIGATE VEGETABLES (SOIL MUST BE LEECHED PERIODICALLY) AND USE OF FERTILIZERS. ISRAELI OFFERED SHARE TECHNICAL DATA WITH JORDANIANS.

4. COL. HANNA SAID HE WOULD PERSONNALLY INSPECT NEW SITE TO DETERMINE FOR HIMSELF PURPOSE OF STRUCTURE AND ITS COMPOSITION. HE STATED JORDANIANS WOULD ASSESS INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ISRAELIS AND PRESENT COMMENTS AT A FUTURE MEETING. HKJ CONCERN WAS THAT "JORDANIAN PEOPLE SOUTH OF THE DAMS WERE NOT HARMED IN ANY WAY, BUT THAT THIS COULD ONLY BE DETERMINED AFTER STUDY."

5. VARDI AND MINTZHER STATED THEY WOULD WELCOME ANY JORDANIAN PROPOSALS, THAT DECISIONS REACHED SHOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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BENEFIT BOTH COUNTRIES AND THAT GOAL SHOULD BE MAXIMUM EFFICIENT USE OF WATER. FURTHER SUGGESTION WAS MADE EXPERTS COLLABORATE ON GOAL OF MAXIMUM UTILIZATION AND LET POLITICAL PROBLEMS INTERFERE AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.

6. ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, COL. HANNA REQUESTED INFORMATION ON IDF SECURITY FENCE IN WADE ARABI. HE REITERATED JORDAN'S BUILDING OF A NEW HIGHWAY AND ACCESS TO ARTESIAN WELLS WAS HINDERED BY IDF FENCE AND HKJ WANTED IT REMOVED. LEVINSON AGAIN PROMISED PROVIDE A REPLY.

7. COMMENT: ATMOSPHERE ON BOTH SIDES WAS CORDIAL. LEVINSON APPEARED SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY STATEMENTS OF ISRAELI CIVILIANS THAT PURPOSE OF "STRUCTURES" WERE TO INCREASE IRRIGATION RATHER THAN AS PREVIOUSLY CLAIMED TO ANALYZE WATER FLOW. END COMMENT.

8. ABOVE FURNISHED BY SENSITIVE UN SOURCE.

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